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(PSB D-24, 27 October 1952)

It has been generally concluded that of possible future events in the USSR, the problem of Stalin's successor presents one of the best predictable psychological opportunities for the advancement of U.S. national objectives.

Our national objectives aim to bring about a reduction in Soviet power and a modification in the Soviet regime which will make it more amenable to international cooperation. The purpose of this paper is to determine how the passing of Stalin from power can be exploited to help accomplish these objectives.

In order to keep the program within manageable limits and to recognize the objectives, capabilities and vulnerabilities, the following ^{principles} [limitations] must be kept in mind.

1. Our energies, resources and efforts in all cold war activities must be geared toward bringing about a change in the Soviet regime favorable to U.S. national interests.

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2. The problem of succession should not be considered an isolated concept independent of other overt and covert psychological activities, but at the same time noncontributory actions must be eliminated to avoid dissipation of effort.

3. Plans and programs built around leadership succession in the USSR form only one facet, although perhaps the most important, of our cold war activities.

Three incontrovertible assumptions we can make are:

- a. Stalin must die some time;
- b. Strains must exist between individuals and groups closely connected with the problem of succession, even if the subject is never mentioned;
- c. In addition to strains connected with the problem of succession, there is evidence of dissatisfaction within each stratum of Soviet society.

To bring about a change in the Soviet regime, three phased approaches must be followed.

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1. Plant the seeds of disillusionment for any prospects of improvement of life in the Soviet Union under the present regime.
2. Create a restlessness within a power element.
3. Exploit this disillusionment and restlessness in a positive manner in order to bring about an alternative to the present regime.

In order to establish a psychological climate which would intensify disaffection in the Soviet populace, all overt and covert media and means must be used to ^{intensify} ~~imprint~~ disillusionment in both the general public and a power element.

The structure, organization, leadership, training, equipment, composition and physical location of the armed forces of the Soviet Union point to this power element as the principal and primary target for our psychological efforts.

In order to exploit the strains inherent in Soviet society mentioned in assumption "b." above, target groups must be selected for special attention.

In order to exploit the group dissatisfaction noted in assumption

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"e." above and to develop an alternative which will gain the confidence and support of the populace, our psychological attack should concentrate upon realistic and properly timed support of the armed forces.

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